

IV. REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-10 are hereby cancelled and new claims 11-20 are submitted for consideration.

Summary of the Office Action

Prior claims 1, 2, and 6 were rejected under 35USC102(e) on the basis of the cited reference Jaing et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,213,651. Prior claims 3-5 and 7-10 were rejected under 35USC103(a). The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejection in view of the above amendment to the claims and following remarks.

The Invention

New claims 11-20 describe a device for connecting electro/optical circuits and a method of making such a device. The device comprises a housing having openings (building blocks) which allow the insertion of a multiplicity of connectors. The connectors are mounted on support panels which are formed in a particular configuration. The support panels are supported on the housing. The support panels provide a means for supporting electro/optical circuits as part of the device. The cited reference Jiang et al. does not teach a connection device or anything related to the particular configuration of supporting panels of the connector device of the claims under consideration.

Discussion of the Cited References

The reference Jiang is cited in support of both the examiner's anticipation rejection and the obviousness rejection. The cited reference describes a system for mounting fiber optic transmitter and receiver elements which is described at column 3, lines 39-47 as follows:

"The present invention includes a method, apparatus and system for vertical board construction of fiber optic transmitters, receivers and transceivers. Briefly, fiber optic transmitter and receiver electrical elements are implemented on two separate substantially parallel boards in a fiber optic module. The parallel boards are mounted substantially perpendicular to the base of the fiber optic module and the system printed circuit board to which it attaches, to reduce the footprint of the fiber optic module."

The above constitutes the entire teaching of the cited reference that is relative to the subject invention, as described in new claims 11-20. There is no teaching of the use of flexible sheets folded to provide multiple parallel panels which provide a series of supporting surfaces for electro/optical circuits. The circuit boards 106 and 108 of Jiang are independently mounted in slots 240 on base 205.

As the claims, now under consideration, positively recite the support panel configuration, it is clear that the rejection of the claims based on anticipation is now moot.

With respect to the supporting panels of the cancelled claims, the Examiner specifically indicates that no such configuration is taught by Jiang, et al and then further indicates as follows:

"However, it is well known in the art that two or more rigid sheets attached to a flexible substrate perform semi-rigid printed circuit boards or PCB's and form an integral whole and the components can be attached to the sheets with a maximum of space is available and the sheets can subsequently be folded to minimize the size of the device."

If the Examiner seeks to apply the above to new claims 11-20, then, applicant must submit that there is nothing in Jiang et al to support this statement and that the statement is a significant exaggeration of the scope of 35USC103.

Since there is no apparent support for the Examiner's above conclusions, the applicant is at a loss to effectively attack the basis of these conclusions. If such conclusions are based on the

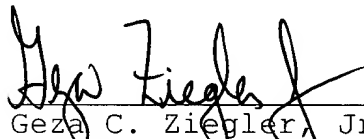
Examiner's personal knowledge, then Applicant requests an affidavit under 37C.F.R., section 1.107(b) detailing the Examiner's reasoning.

In view of the newly formulated claims, Applicant submits that the rejection based on 35USC103(a) is no longer tenable.

In view of the remarks stated above, Applicant submits that all of the claims under consideration contain patentable subject matter and favorable action by the Examiner is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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7 January 2004
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